

Randolph Peachy House
Williamsburg
James City County
Virginia

HABS No. VA-197

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORIC AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District of Virginia

Historic American Buildings Survey

Prepared at Washington Office
for Southeast Unit

PEACHY-RANDOLPH HOUSE
Williamsburg, James City County, Virginia

Owner: Williamsburg Restoration

Date of erection: Probably c. 1725

Present condition: Good, restored

Description:

The form of the house has undergone changes, and the original design is not certain. At present it is a long two-story house, a modified "L" in plan, with a new one-and-a-half-story wing to the east. This latter was constructed in 1940 on old foundations. The west end of the house is a unit of four rooms to a floor with a center chimney, giving corner fireplaces. The east section (now middle) is one room deep and comprises only a hall and one large room on each floor. When the house was increased in size the two units were joined so that the south front became a practically symmetrical facade of seven bays with the door centered. The structure is frame, weatherboarded, but at the second-floor line is a raised band to simulate a string course. The cornice has modillions, including one at each of the angles, as is characteristic in Williamsburg. The window sash is largely original and has nine-over-nine lights in the lower range and six-over-nine in the upper. The center chimney appears at the angle of the hip. The east end is gabled, with front and rear slopes of different pitches.

On the interior there is much original trim. The stair was removed many years ago and that in place in 1939 was approximately a copy of that in the Wythe house. The east room has the finest eighteenth-century paneling in Williamsburg. All walls are paneled, and the north and south walls are pierced by a series of windows. The fireplace wall has a large marble mantel with an horizontal panel of plain facing. Both edges of the marble are worked with moulded chamfers, that on the jambs of the fireplace continuing across the head. The panel above is worked with a broad shallow facsimile of a wood beveled and moulded panel. There is a narrow marble shelf. An unusual feature of the fireplace is that the jambs are of gauged brick. A pair of doors flanking the mantel lead to large lighted closets. The doors have an unusual panel arrangement, with the panels arranged symmetrically about the narrow lock rail, first a pair of long panels, then short horizontal ones. The left-hand room is less elaborately paneled and has lost its original mantel. This is almost certainly that shown in Frank Wallis' Old Colonial Architecture and Furniture as "Mantel in Williamsburg in House Occupied by Lafayette in 1824" (George H. Polley

and Company, Boston, 1887).

An examination of the framing of the roof of the west portion shows that it once had a valley running east and west between two hipped or gabled divisions. The water from the valley was led by a trough hewn out of a solid oak piece to the west wall. The valley was apparently filled in because the roof leaked.

Author:

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Date:

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